



Urban District Council of Washington

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR 1944.

WILLIAM D. MILLAR,
M.B., B.S., B.Hy. (Durh.), D.P.H.

J. MITCHELL,
M.S.I.A., Sanitary Inspector.

1945.

PELAW-ON-TYNE ;
Co-OPERATIVE WHOLESALE SOCIETY'S PRINTING WORKS.



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Urban District Council of Washington.

List of Councillors for the year 1944-45.

Chairman :

Councillor HENRY DYSON, J.P.

Vice-Chairman :

Councillor ALBERT RODDAM.

Councillor T. ANDERSON.

Councillor W. HASKETT.

„ M. ALLON.

„ W. JAMIESON.

„ W. CLAYTON.

„ R. PATTERSON.

„ A. W. COLE, J.P.

„ T. POTTER.

„ J. R. COXON.

„ S. PURVIS.

„ R. COATES.

„ J. A. WILLIAMS.

„ J. CULLEN.

„ J. WALMSLEY.

„ J. M. CULLINAN.

„ Mrs. GAUNT.

„ R. C. WANLESS.

„ J. W. GIBSON.

„ G. H. YOUNG.

Clerk of the Council :

Mr. M. ANDERSON.

Staff of the Health Department.

Medical Officer of Health :

WILLIAM D. MILLAR, M.B., B.S., B.Hy. (Durh.), D.P.H.

Senior Sanitary Inspector :

J. MITCHELL, M.S.I.A.

Additional Sanitary Inspector :

P. MCKENNA, C.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.



*Council Chambers,
Washington,
Co. Durham.*

*To the Chairman and Members of the
Urban District Council of Washington.*

MADAM AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Eighth Annual Report on the health and sanitary conditions of the district and the work of the Health Department for the year 1944.

The report, following the procedure of the last few years, is still curtailed to some extent.

The general standard of health remains good, having regard to the prevailing conditions.

The birth-rate has increased during 1944, being 19·9 per 1,000 population, as compared with 17·2 per 1,000 in 1943.

The death-rate has decreased from 12·2 per 1,000 in 1943 to 11·6 per 1,000.

The infantile mortality figure shows an improvement, 19 children under the age of one year having died during the year, as against 22 in 1943.

The incidence of infectious disease was very much less in 1944 than in 1943, the number of cases of scarlet fever and diphtheria being, respectively, 30 and 36, as against 90 and 77 in the previous 12 months.

A comparison of the figures of tuberculosis cases in 1944 and 1943 shows some perplexing aspects.

In 1943, 20 notifications of respiratory tuberculosis were received and 14 deaths resulted from this disease, whereas, in 1944, 13 notifications were received and only 3 deaths occurred.

On the other hand, in 1943 there were 9 notifications of non-respiratory tuberculosis and there were no deaths. During 1944, 3 notifications of non-respiratory tuberculosis were received and 8 deaths were reported.

It will be seen, therefore, that the non-respiratory type was responsible for nearly three times as many deaths as the respiratory type during the last 12 months.

I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the assistance afforded me by the Chairman and Members of the Council, and by my fellow officials, especially those on the staff of the Health Department.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

W. D. MILLAR, M.B., B.S., B.Hy.(Durh.), D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.**Statistics of the Area.**

Area of the Urban District	...	...	...	...	5,758 acres
Number of inhabited houses (at end of 1944 according to rate books)	...	...	...	...	4,368
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	£63,250
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	...	£241

Extract from Vital Statistics.

Live Births—

Birth-rate per 1,000 per estimated resident population ... 19·9

Still Births—

Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births ... 24·0

Deaths—

Death-rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population ... 11·6

Deaths from Puerperal Causes (Headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar-General's Short List)—

	Deaths.	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births.
No. 29—Puerperal and Post-abortion Sepsis...	0	0
No. 30—Other Maternal causes... ..	0	0
Total	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Death-rate of Infants under 1 year of age—

All Infants, per 1,000 live births ... 58·3

Legitimate Infants, per 1,000 legitimate live births ... 57·6

Illegitimate Infants, per 1,000 illegitimate live births ... 76·9

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) ... 25

„ Measles (all ages) ... 0

„ Whooping Cough (all ages) ... 0

„ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age) ... 1

Vital Statistics.

Births.

The birth-rate increased from 17·2 in 1943 to 19·9 in 1944.

The birth-rate of Washington compared with the rest of the country generally is as follows :—

	Rate per 1,000 of population.
England and Wales	17·6
125 County Boroughs and Great Towns .	20·3
148 Smaller Towns	20·9
London Administrative County	15·0
Washington Urban District	19·9

Still Births.

England and Wales	0·50
126 County Boroughs and Great Towns .	0·64
148 Smaller Towns	0·61
London Administrative County	0·42
Washington Urban District	0·43

Deaths.

The death-rate in 1944 was 11·6, compared with 12·4 in 1943.

The following figures show comparisons :—

England and Wales	11·6
125 County Boroughs and Great Towns .	13·7
148 Smaller Towns	12·4
London	15·7
Washington Urban District	11·6

The statistics regarding causes of death, supplied by the Registrar-General, classified according to sex and the 36 divisions of the Registrar-General's Short List of Causes, are set out below.

Causes of Death in Washington Urban District, 1944.

Causes of Death.							Males.	Females.
ALL CAUSES							104	86
1	Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers .. .. .						..	..
2	Cerebro Spinal Fever						1	1
3	Scarlet Fever .. .. .						..	..
4	Whooping Cough .. .. .						..	..
5	Diphtheria .. .. .						..	..
6	Tuberculosis of Respiratory System						3	..
7	Other Forms of Tuberculosis						5	3
8	Syphilitic Diseases .. .. .						..	..
9	Influenza						2	3
10	Measles .. .. .						..	..
11	Acute Polio Myelitis and Polio Encephalitis .. .. .						..	..
12	Acute Infantile Encephalitis .. .. .						..	..
13	Cancer of Buc. Cavity and Œsop. (M) Uterus (F). .. .. .						..	2
14	Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum						4	3
15	Cancer of Breast .. .. .						..	2
16	Cancer of all other Sites						9	5
17	Diabetes						1	5
18	Intracranial Vascular Lesions						14	17
19	Heart Disease						15	19
20	Other Diseases of Circulatory System						2	..
21	Bronchitis						12	8
22	Pneumonia						2	2
23	Other Respiratory Diseases .. .. .						..	..
24	Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum						1	..
25	Diarrhoea (under 2 years)						1	..
26	Appendicitis						1	..
27	Other Digestive Diseases						3	..
28	Nephritis						1	..
29	Puerperal and Post-abortion Sepsis .. .. .						..	..
30	Other Maternal Causes .. .. .						..	..
31	Premature Birth						2	3
32	Con. Mal.; Birth Injuries, Infant.; Dis.						4	1
33	Suicide						1	1
34	Road Traffic Accidents						1	..
35	Other Violent Causes						4	..
36	All Other Causes						15	11

GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE
(Statistical Branch),
TERRA NOVA SCHOOL,
SOUTHPORT.

SECTION B.

General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

A list of Public Health Officers will be found on page 4.

Laboratory Facilities.

There has been no change in the laboratory arrangements during the past year. Bacteriological examinations are carried out at the Public Health Laboratory, King's College, Newcastle-on-Tyne, in accordance with arrangements made between the County Council and Durham University.

Ambulance Facilities.

In cases of infectious disease one ambulance is provided by the Chester-le-Street Joint Hospital.

For cases of accident or sickness two ambulances are provided by the Local Authority.

Hospital.

Persons who are suffering from an infectious disease are removed to the Hospital for Infectious Diseases, Chester-le-Street.

Other hospitals outside the district which are made use of for the treatment of medical and surgical cases are :—

1. Hospital for Infectious Diseases, Walker Gate,
Newcastle-on-Tyne.
2. Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
3. Fleming Memorial Hospital, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
4. Princess Mary Maternity Hospital, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
5. Throat, Nose, and Ear Hospital, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
6. Eye Infirmary, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
7. Eye Infirmary, Sunderland.
8. Royal Infirmary, Sunderland.

SECTION C.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

1. (i) *Water Supply.*

The Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Gateshead Water Co., and the South Shields and Sunderland Water Co., supply the Urban District with water, which is satisfactory in quantity and quality. In Springwell area 850 yards of 6-inch main were laid to improve the supply. The gallonage per head of population is 27 per day. Two samples of water were taken during the year and submitted to King's College, Newcastle, for examination. A favourable report was received in each case.

(ii) *Drainage and Sewerage.*

The sewage of the District is discharged into the River Wear at three points, one near Barmston Forge, and two at Washington Staithes. The waste matter at Barmston only is treated in settlement tanks before being allowed to flow into the river. The settlement tanks were cleansed during 1941.

2. *Rivers and Streams.*

Favourable reports as to the condition of the various water-courses in the district were received during the past year.

3. (i) *Closet Accommodation.*

At the end of the year the various types in use within the Urban District were as follows :—

				1943.	1944.
Water-closets	...	...	...	4,704	4,664
Ash-closets	...	...	...	36	36
Ash-pit Privies	...	...	...	2	2
Chemical-closets	...	...	...	62	62

(ii) Public Cleansing.

The scavenging service, as in previous years, was carried out chiefly by direct labour, 15 isolated premises being dealt with by private individuals.

The cleansing staff includes 11 loaders and 3 drivers, and with 3 seven-cubic-yard vehicles (1 S. and D. Freighter and 2 Karrier Bantams) provide the area of 5,758 acres, including a total of 4,530 dwelling-houses and other premises, with a service varying from 4 to 6 days throughout the year.

Disposal is by tipping in disused quarry workings and on low lying agricultural land upon request being made to the Council by owners or tenants. Numerous requests were made for tipping on agricultural land. In the Usworth Colliery and Springwell Wards the major portion of filling-in and levelling took place. During the year under review approximately 70 per cent. of crude and 30 per cent of miscellaneous tipping took place. Such tips used by Council employees are trimmed at intervals, and generally kept in good condition.

No complaints were received regarding the use of the various tips during the year, and no vermin infestation was in evidence.

The total estimated quantity of refuse, including household and trade waste, collected and disposed of was 8,845 tons, an increase of 380 tons compared with the previous year. The increase in tonnage compared with last year is due to the number of additional premises that are now included in the weekly collection. The total cost for the service during the year was £3,778·9.

UNIT COSTS.

Expenditure per ton per annum	...	...	...	8s. 6½d.
„ per 1,000 houses per annum	...	...	...	£834·2
„ per house per week	...	...	...	3·8d.
The estimated weight per house per year	...	...	...	1·95 tons.

A comparative statement of the scavenging costs for the years during the war and the year prior to the outbreak of hostilities is given herewith :—

Year.	Annual Cost.	Approximate cost per house.	
	£	s.	d.
1938-39	2,418	10	8
1939-40	2,488	10	11
1940-41	2,757	12	1½
1941-42	3,065	13	5½
1942-43	3,792	16	8
1943-44	4,258	18	8½
1944-45	3,779	16	8

(iii) *Salvage.*

The collection of salvage materials was carried out on similar lines as for 1942 report.

The work of sorting, grading, and preparation of materials for despatch to the various merchants was carried out by two men at the storage depot located at Shop Houses.

During the year the Salvage Stewards, under W.V.S. leadership, maintained their visitation of the occupants of houses within defined areas.

The shortage of animal feeding stuffs caused an increase of private collectors within the urban area, involving approximately 70 tons for the period under review ; even the contents of receptacles placed at points by the Council were acquired.

The quantity of materials collected during the year show a reduction compared with the previous three years, and is chiefly due to the lack of markets for tin and rubber. The income correspondingly is affected, due to reduced market values, and increased number of collectors for the materials of value.

The following returns show the quantities and value of materials collected by Council employees since the inception of salvage within the Urban area :—

Year.					Weight.		Value.			
					Tons.	cwts.	£	s.	d.	
1940-41	...	...	...	...	93	0	339	16	0	
1941-42	...	...	...	...	222	1	811	5	7	
1942-43	...	...	...	...	211	2	832	11	8	
1943-44	...	...	...	...	199	1	824	12	8	
1944-45	...	...	...	...	122	1	604	3	4	
Total	...	...	...	...	847	5	£3,412	9	3	

*(iv) Sanitary Inspection of the Area.**(a) Number and Nature of Inspections.*

Visits and re-visits to premises under Public Health and					
Housing Acts ... ..	...	...	...	...	1,441
Visits to Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops	...	...	...	...	49
„ Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	3
„ Factories and Workshops	...	...	...	...	32
„ Work in progress	...	...	...	...	62
„ Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	...	—
„ Pig-keepers' premises	...	...	...	...	29
„ Fish and Fruit Shops	...	...	...	...	38
Visits paid in connection with Infectious Diseases and					
disinfection of premises	...	...	...	...	103
Visits to Tents, Vans, Sheds, and similar structures...					11
Total number of Visits					<u>1,768</u>

INFESTATION.

The work of treatment for rats within the sewerage system in the urban district was carried out under the supervision of Mr. N. C. Harrison, Surveyor, and on the method as prescribed by the Ministry of Food. To him I am indebted for the following information :—

Number of Manholes baited	...	...	758
Number of Points open baited	...	...	6
Poison (zinc-phosphide)	...	...	takes 168
Number of Rats destroyed	...	...	1,877
Cost of Treatment	...	...	£164
Cost per Rat destroyed	...	...	1s. 9d.

The War Agricultural Executive Committee dealt with infestations on lands owned or occupied by 16 farmers within the urban area.

Complaints received during the year regarding surface infestations numbered 40, of which 5 appeared to be unjustified, 2 were in respect of premises previously notified, while two others were notified to the appropriate authority for their consideration and action.

The following table shows the kind of premises involved and the nature of the infestation :—

Premises.			Nature of Infection.		
			Minor.	Major.	Reservoir.
Dwelling-houses	...	...	5	0	0
Food Shops	...	...	2	0	0
Other Shops	...	...	4	0	0
Factories	...	...	0	2	0
Animal Shelters	...	...	16(7)	0	0
Other places	...	...	2	0	1(1)

NOTE.—The figures in brackets show the number of premises on which the infestation was dealt with by the owners.

(b) Number of Notices served and complied with.

	Number of Informal Notices Served.	Number of Statutory Notices Served.	Number of Nuisances abated after Notice.
Dwelling-houses—Structural defects .	712	16	705
„ Foul conditions ...	52	1	24
„ Overcrowding ...	...	...	...
Lodging-houses ...	...	...	...
Dairies and Milkshops ...	...	...	...
Cowsheds ...	1	...	1
Bakehouses ...	...	...	...
Slaughterhouses ...	...	...	...
Ash-pits and Privies ...	...	...	...
Deposits of Refuse and Manure ...	2	1	2
Water-closets ...	65	1	53
Defective Yard Paving ...	2	...	2
House-drainage—			
Defective Traps ...	23	1	21
No disconnection from Sewers .	...	...	...
Other Faults ...	57	3	51
Water Supply ...	50	...	44
Pigsties ...	...	...	...
Animals improperly kept ...	1	1	1
Offensive Trades ...	...	...	...
Smoke Nuisances ...	...	...	...
Other Nuisances ...	61	3	63
Totals ...	1026	27	967

(v) *Shops Act, 1934.*

Under the Shops Act, 1934, inspection of 61 shops in the district was carried out during the year. It was found necessary in 6 cases to serve informal notices on owners of shops having regard to the lack of suitable and sufficient water-closet accommodation.

(vi) *Smoke Abatement.*

No action taken during the year.

(vii) *Swimming Baths.*

There are no swimming baths or pools in the district.

(viii) *Eradication of Bed Bugs.*

					Infested.	Disinfested.
(1)	Council houses	...	...	...	10	10
	Other houses	...	...	...	5	5
(2)	Methods employed for freeing infested houses from bed bugs	...	...		Zaldecide or Foompest.	
(3)	Methods employed for ensuring that the belongings of tenants are free from vermin before removal to Council houses	...	...	...	Zaldecide or Foompest.	
(4)	Whether work carried out by the Local Authority or by a Contractor	...			Local Authority	
(5)	The measures taken by way of supervision or education of tenants to prevent infestation or re-infestation after cleansing	...	...	...		None

4. *Schools.*

The schools in the area under the jurisdiction of the County Council of Durham and the water supply and sanitary conditions are adequate and satisfactory.

*To the Chairman and Members of the
Washington Urban District Council.*

MR. CHAIRMAN, MADAM, AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the pleasure to present to you my Ninth Annual Report on the work of your Health and Cleansing Department during the year 1944.

Co-operation with the Army, Air Force, and Civil Defence authorities have to no small extent interfered with the routine work of your Cleansing Department since the commencement of the war, and figures given may create an unreal picture compared with other similar local authorities.

A summary of the work is given under the various sections, and I wish to take this opportunity of thanking the Council, members of the staff, and members of other voluntary bodies within the Urban District for their co-operation and interest in work undertaken during the year.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

J. MITCHELL, M.S.I.A.,
Chief Sanitary Inspector.

SECTION D.

Housing.

1. INSPECTION OF DWELLING-HOUSES DURING THE YEAR.

- (1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... 704
 (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose 1,441
- (2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925. Nil.
 (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... Nil.
- (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ... Nil.
- (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... 110

2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers ... 76

3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR.

A.—Proceedings under Sections 9, 10, and 11 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... 15
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—
- (a) By Owners ... 15
- (b) By Local Authority in default of Owners... Nil.

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 23
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—
- (a) By Owners 23
- (b) By Local Authority in default of Owners Nil.

C.—Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made Nil.
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders Nil.

D.—Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—

- (1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made Nil.
- (2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit Nil.

During the period under review the following houses were removed from the Register as being completely demolished, or converted for purposes other than for human habitation, viz. :—

	Houses					No. of Persons Displaced
New Rows (1938)	3	.....	9
The Fold (1936)	4	.....	16
Light Pipe Row (1936)	8	.....	29
Victoria Place (1938)	4	.....	16
Shop Houses (1938)	5	.....	17
Total	<u>24</u>	.....	<u>87</u>

Overcrowding within the Urban District has increased appreciably during the year.

The housing position on December 31st, 1943, was :—

Dwelling-houses in respect of which the Council had made arrangements to re-house persons from condemned property 188

Number of dwelling-houses commenced (including those completed) 110

Number of houses completed to date 84

Number of houses remaining to be completed 104

The following is a summary of the different types of dwelling-houses erected by the Local Authority up to December 31st, 1944 :—

Houses built under :	No. of Houses	No. of Apartments			
		2	3	4	5
Act, 1890	149	...	86	4	59
Housing Act, 1919	79	...	...	69	10
„ „ 1924	744	80*	310	353	1
Housing Acts, 1930-6	214	...	30	184	...
Total	1,186	80*	426	610	70

* Aged Persons Houses.

The total number of houses controlled by the Urban District Council is now 1,186.

SECTION E.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

(a) Milk Supply.

The following are details of persons and premises registered under the Milk and Dairies Order, 1926, within the district :—

Number of cowkeepers	...	...	...	16
Number of wholesale and retail purveyors of milk	...	...	...	53
Number of dairies	...	...	...	15

There are 35 retail purveyors of milk registered for the sale of milk in closed and unopened bottles in which it is delivered to the premises.

Visits to cowshed and dairy premises numbered 89. The premises inspected were found generally to be satisfactory.

Under the Milk (Special Designations) Regulations the following licences were granted during the year :—

Licences to sell " Pasteurised " Milk (Supple- mentary Licence)	...	...	...	1
Licences to produce "Accredited" Milk (granted by County Council)	...	...	...	4

The following table shows the number of samples submitted under the Regulations to the Dairy Husbandry Section, Armstrong

College, Newcastle upon Tyne, for bacteriological and biological examination, and the results of the various tests :—

Designation	No. of Samples submitted	Type of Examination						Examination for Tubercle Bacilli	
		Coliform Test		Plate Count		Phosphatase Test			
		Passed	Failed	Passed	Failed	Passed	Failed	Neg.	Pos.
Accredited Milk	3	3	...	2	1	...	...	3	...
Pasteurised Milk	1	...	1	...	1	...	...	1	...
Non-designated Milk	11	4	7	4	7	...	...	9	1
Total number of Samples submitted	15	7	8	6	9	...	...	13	1

Where samples of designated milk failed to comply with the standards specified in the Regulations, the matter was taken up with the producer. Non-designated milk samples showing an unsatisfactory bacteriological standard were referred to the producers for their observations. Further visits and inspections of their premises are followed up by taking “repeat” samples.

(b) Inspection of Meat and Slaughterhouses.

As in the previous year, all slaughtering for the Urban District was carried out under Government control at Newcastle upon Tyne, the meat being transported in bulk to a local centre for final distribution to meat retailers.

Periodical inspections to shops, &c., were made during the year to see that the provisions of the Public Health (Meat) Regulations were being complied with. Informal Notices served resulted in improvements being carried out on 4 premises.

Food Control.

In the performance of the duties as Food Enforcement Inspector, visits were made to food premises, and involved the condemning of $16\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. of foodstuffs as unfit for human consumption.

The following is a list of the foods surrendered for disposal and for which condemnation certificates were issued :—

Meat	...	...	...	...	164 lb.
Pork (frozen)	...	...	...	...	49 lb.
Tinned meat	...	...	...	...	130 lb.
„ fish	...	...	...	...	22 lb.
„ vegetables	...	...	...	...	38 lb.
„ soups	...	...	...	...	3 lb.
„ milk	...	...	...	...	975 tins
Other tinned foods	...	...	...	...	92 lb.
Jam	...	...	...	...	58 lb.
Butter	...	...	...	...	9 lb.
Tea	...	...	...	...	1½ lb.
Bacon	...	...	...	...	44 lb.
Cooked ham	...	...	...	...	11 lb.
Pork sausages	...	...	...	...	24 lb.
Semolina Pudding	...	...	...	...	23 lb.
Apples	...	...	...	...	257 lb.
Fish cakes	...	...	...	...	14 lb.
Eggs	...	...	...	...	4 doz.
Chocolate	...	...	...	...	16 bars
Sweets	...	...	...	...	21 lb.

SECTION F.

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and other Diseases.

The number of scarlet fever cases which occurred in 1944 was 30, compared with 90 notifications in 1943.

The number of diphtheria cases was 36, compared with 77 notifications in 1943.

Diphtheria antitoxin is kept in stock for distribution to medical practitioners on request.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

The number of children who are now immunised in the area is estimated as follows :—

Ages.		Total number of Children.	Estimated number Immunised.	Percentage.
0-5 years	...	1,500	480	32·0
5-15 years	...	3,000	1,843	61·4

The number of children who were immunised during 1944 was—

0-5 years	...	...	...	...	92
5-15 years	...	...	...	...	40
					—
		Total	...	...	...132
					<u>132</u>

Tuberculosis—New Cases and Mortality for 1944.

AGE PERIOD.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Respiratory.		Non-respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-respiratory.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0— ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
1 Year	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	...
5 Years	1	...	...	1	...	...	1	...
15 „ ... ..	...	3	...	...	...	...	2	1
25 „	2	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
35 „	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
45 „ ... ..	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
55 „	1	...	...	...	2	...	...	...
65 „ and up'ds	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals	8	5	1	2	3	...	5	3

Tuberculosis.

PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS.—13 notifications were received, compared to 20 in 1943.

There were 3 deaths, compared to 14 last year.

NON-PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS.—3 notifications were received, compared to 9 in 1943.

There were 8 deaths, compared to none last year.

